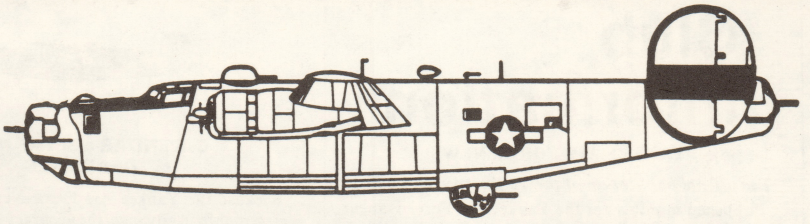
YANKEE AIR FORCE



Vol. 3 No. 7 July, 1984

10 MILES HIGH

AN AMERICAN ADVENTURE

YANKEE AIR FORCE

Barry Lastinger, wearing pressure suit in freefall.

Club Information

YANKEE AIR FORCE NEWS

The official publication of the Yankee Air Force Inc.

Published monthly for the Yankee Air Force Hangar 2041, A Street, Willow Run Airport, P.O. Box 1100, Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197. Yankee Air Force Inc. is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Michigan, and exempt from taxation under IRS Code Section 501 (C) (3). All copy and advertisements must reach the above address by the 15th of the month, for publication in the following issue.

Editor ..... John W. Syler IV
Assistant to the Editor ..... Barbara Sutton
Calendar ..... Stan Reich
Hangar Talk ..... Frank Modlinski
Aircraft Reports ..... Jim Hanford
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Subscriptions Available — $6.00 U.S. currency per year mailed within the United States and Canada. $9.00 per year mailed outside the U.S. and Canada. Write: Yankee Air Force News, P.O. Box 1100, Ypsilanti, MI 48197.

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CALENDAR and YAF NEWS DEADLINES

Because the Yankee Air Force News is compiled at least a month in advance, the accuracy of items appearing in the calendar cannot be guaranteed. If you plan to attend any particular meeting, please check with the chairperson to confirm the time and place.

Calendar deadlines are the same as the YAF News deadlines. It is the responsibility of each Division to get calendar info and news to the YAF News by the first of each month, for publication the following month.

HANGAR AND ROOM RENTALS

The Yankee Air Force Hangar is available for aircraft rentals and room rentals. If you are a member and own an aircraft which is a military aircraft or you own a civilian aircraft which is at least 30 years old, you may wish to rent space for your plane in the YAF Hangar. Rents help fund the restoration and operation of the Hangar. Contact Jack Spanich, 422-1616.

MEETING ROOM RENTALS

Rooms are now available in the Hangar for rental to other groups. The cost is $1.00 per person with a minimum of $25.00. A group must have a member who is also a member of the YAF, and someone with a key must be present. Each application must be made to the Willow Run Division Board of Directors at least 45 days prior to the requested meeting night. The Board will then approve or deny the use of the room based on any conflict with YAF activities, conflict with lease agreements or activities or groups deemed to be in conflict with the goals of the YAF. The minimum $25.00 must be paid upon signing the rental contract, with the balance paid within 7 days after the meeting. Kitchen facilities may be used, but must be cleaned after use. It is the responsibility of the YAF member to insure that security is maintained and rooms are cleaned up afterwards. Contact Todd Hackbarth, 495-1111.

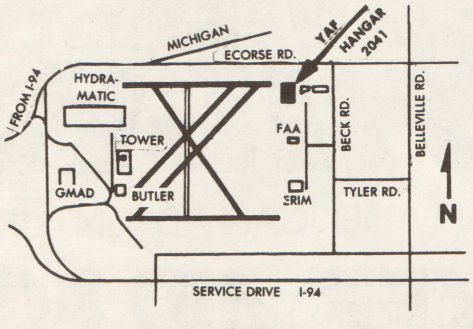
YAF HEADQUARTERS - WILLOW RUN AIRPORT

The Yankee Air Force National Headquarters, Museum, Hangar and Flight Line is located at historic Willow Run Airport, in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Willow Run was built in 1941 by the U.S. Army to be the air base for Ford Motor Companys B-24 bomber plant, located on the west side of the field. The airport was owned by the University of Michigan until the mid 1970s and is now owned and operated by the Wayne County Road Commission which strongly supports our efforts to preserve a part of the history of Willow Run and Southeastern Michigan, as well as historical aviation in general.

To drive to Headquarters from the East or South, exit from I-94 at Belleville Rd., drive North to Tyler Rd. (about 1 mile), turn left on Tyler, then turn right on Beck and proceed to the Airport entrance on Beck Rd. From the West or North, follow Ecorse to Beck Rd., turn South on Beck and proceed to the Airport entrance. The YAF is located in the Northernmost hangar on the east ramp.

Headquarters is always opens to all members who wish to visit or participate in restoration projects.

YAF HEADQUARTERS — WILLOW RUN AIRPORT



YANKEE AIR FORCE DIVISIONS

Headquarters, Willow Run, YAF First Division
Hangar 2041 (A Street)
Willow Run Airport (east side)
P.O. Box 1100
Ypsilanti, MI 48197
313-483-4030

Meetings 1st Wednesday of each month, 7:30 - YAF Hangar. All Divisions are encouraged to participate in the meetings at Willow Run and to be a part of the activities at National Headquarters.

Northeast, YAF Second Division
Essex County Airport
125 Passaic Ave.
Fairfield, N.J. 07006
201-575-9621

Meetings 1st Wed. of each month, 7:30, YAF Reddy Room at the rear of the Essex County Improvement Authority Building.

Mid-Michigan, YAF Third Division
Flint Bishop Airport
G-3101 West Bristol Road
Flint, MI 48507

Meetings 2nd Wednesday of each month, 7:00, Skybolt Aviation Hangar, Bishop.

WI/IL State Line, YAF Fourth Div.
Blackhawk Airways Hangar
Rock County Airport
Highway 51 S.
Janesville, WI 53545

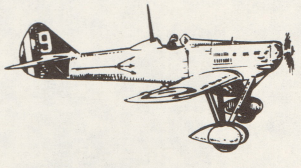
Saginaw Valley, YAF Fifth Division
Harry Browne Airport
Saginaw, MI

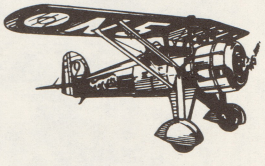
Meetings 3rd Tuesday of each month. Career Opportunity Center, Saginaw, Michigan.

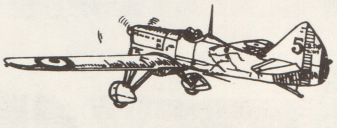
YANKEE AIR FORCE MEMBERSHIPS

Annual Membership ..... $ 25
Annual Membership - Spouse 10
Life Membership - (individual) 500
Senior Life Membership (over 60) 250
Corporate Membership - Minimum Annual Dues 500
Initiation Fee 10
(one time fee paid by each new member upon joining)

Renewals must be received within 30 days after expiration, or member must renew as a new member with initiator fee.







EDITORIAL

As a participant in the various activities on Memorial Day on May 28 last, it struck me as ironic, that the men and women we honor on Memorial Day do not see themselves as heroic in any manner. Those veterans who are not numbered among the dead, who nonetheless we also honor on that day, feel that they merely did their job, but are imbued with a fierce sense of patriotism, seem to, so vividly express by their sacrifice in our wars, (especially that of Vietnam) the belief I've held for so long; that each of us, as Americans owe our country more than just the taxes we pay, the laws we obey and our participation in the democratic process of a free people.

We, who love this country and revere it's ideals and it's heroes and heroines, and who believe this is a nation worth fighting for, find it hard to accept that there are citizens in our midst, who feel they owe this land nothing. That in effect, the American way of life, is one great "free lunch." Some of these individuals look with scorn on anyone so foolish as to publicly express feelings of pride for being able to serve America. Well, if that be the case, I say, thank God for fools such as we; fools such as our war veterans. Thank God for the row upon row of the forever young men and women who lie beneath white Crosses and Stars of David, fools ". . . who gave the last full measure of devotion," their young lives, to grant to us, their sons and daughters, the freedom that we now enjoy. Those among us who mock, as foolishness, the surrender of comfort and ease, only to answer the nation's call to arms and go off, leaving their lifes avocation and family and then in a foreign land to be wounded in mind or body, or even to lay down their lives, have those "fools" to thank, for being able to enjoy the luxury of mocking the veterans of **all** our wars, as "fools"!

Standing in the cemetery in Ypsilanti, during the Memorial Day Ceremonies, I reflected on how much we owe these very ordinary, yet very special people, the living and the dead amongst our veterans. And to them, through this medium, I say: Thank You and God Bless You! *John W. Syler, IV*

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

The events of May 19, 1984 set the Yankee Air Force aside from most other "clubs," which form, thinking it would be neat to restore an old airplane, only to discover that manpower and funds were lacking to follow through. In June of 1982, after the Willow Run Airshow, 50 people at Headquarters decided to attempt to purchase the C-47 which **ERIM** had loaned us to put on display. A bold decision for a group less than one year old. However, in September we came up with the $10,000 down payment and began a 20 month restoration project that has been well detailed in this publication. All the hard work and fund raising activities payed off and the YAF proved its legitimacy, when on May 19, with Ed Johns and Dick Bodycomb at the controls, Fred Lockwood in the jump seat and Don Harner in the navigators seat, our beloved "Yankee Doodle Dandy" took to the air once again; after four years of being grounded. During the course of the day, Ed, Dick, Don and Russ Purchase all qualified in the left seat; and in the words of all four, our magnificant ship was perfect. Much appreciation is due to all involved, from the initial idea through the restoration, to the donated materials and the fuel donations for the first flight, from the "Yankee Flyers." Everyone has been named at least once in this publication, so I won't name them again, but the YAF, all around the country can be proud of this day. It shows what we're made of and where we can go from here.

Thanks for making this group the greatest I've ever been associated with, in my life!

Dennis Norton #001

"NEWS BRIEF"

Frank J. Modlinski, YAF #238, has just been elected for a three year term on the Executive Board of the U.A.W. Local #735 at Trustee. Local 735 is the second largest local in the United Auto Workers Union.

Congratulations Frank!!!

MEMORIAL DAY

On Memorial Day, the Yankee Air Force, with the help of the 379th Bombardment Wing at Wurtsmith AFB, dedicated the B-52 at Willow Run as a Memorial to all the Air Crews who served in Southeast Asia. The Ceremony, featuring a dedication speech by Col. Jim Saur of Wurtsmith was highlighted by three low passes by an active duty B-52 from Wurtsmith. The crowd, estimated at 3500, was thrilled by the low passes and superb flying by the Wurtsmith crew. A number of service personnel from Wurtsmith, also travelled to Willow Run to participate, including some who helped defuel and dearm our B-52 after it arrived from Carswell.

In addition to the active duty military personnel, there was also a Color Guard from the Royal Canadian Air Force Association, a United States Marine Color Guard, in their dress blues, from the Ypsilanti American Legion Post and a Color Guard and Drill Team from the Churchill High School AFROTC. Taps were sounded by Mr. Bob Flanigan, son-in-law of Don and Barb Sutton. A flight of A-7s from Selfridge ANG Base also made several low passes over the field, prior to the Ceremony. In addition, Capt. Glenn Lamont, flying his B-25, "Gallant Warrior," Jack Spanich flying his Skyraider and the YAF C-47, "Yankee Doodle Dandy," also flew in salute of the heroes we were honoring that day.

Prior to the Memorial Day Ceremony at Willow Run, Capt. Lamont flew over the Soldier's Monument in the cemetery in Ypsilanti, opening the bomb-bay doors, in Salute of the Airmen who gave their lives in all the wars. Captain Lamont timed his pass perfectly as the "Gallant Warrior" flew over as the last volley was fired, prior to the playing of "Taps." Also participating in the Service at the cemetery was Norm Smallwood, who, with a two-way radio, coordinated Captain Lamont's passes between the Willow Run Tower and Capt. Lamont and the program at the cemetery. YAF News Editor, John W. Syler, gave a brief address on behalf of the Yankee Air Force, including a brief history of the part the "Gallant Warrior" played in the ETO in World War II.

Prior to and following the Dedication Ceremony at Willow Run, the YAF put on a fly-in, drive-in breakfast for all comers in the Hangar. The crowd was so overwhelming, that the cooks ran out of food twice and had to send out for emergency resupply both times. And considering the crummy weather that day and the fact that the big Hangar doors were wide open and it was colder than the day in October when our B-52 arrived, the number of meals that were served was nothing less than extraordianary!

All in all, the lousy weather notwithstanding, the Dedication Ceremony was a very moving and impressive experience both for those of us that took part in it and also for our guests among the general public. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all of the Yankee Air Force members and the Yankee Air Force "Gophers" who worked so hard to make Memorial Day 1984 so special and outstanding!

Dennis Norton

NANCY PILON SUCCUMBS TO CANCER

Nancy Pilon, wife of Richard Pilon, succumbed to cancer. Nancy and Richard were co-founders of the Yankee Air Force Mid-Michigan Division. Nancy and Richard were married for fifteen years and had ten children, (all grown). The funeral was held in Owosso, the Pilon's home. Yankee Air Force members were Pall Bearers. The officers and members of the Yankee Air Force, extend their most sincere condolences to Richard Pilon and family.

HANGAR TALK

"THE GOONEY FLIES AGAIN"

May 17, 1984, the Yankee Doodle Dandy received its Airworthiness Certificate, from the F.A.A. Mr. John Taylor, F.A.A. Inspector, checked the work records, maintenance books, repair specifications, and rode along on the ground run-up. He said to Crew Chief, Fred Lockwood, YAF #132. *"This is the best looking C-47 in the Nation."* How about that Dandies, and right on schedule too!!!

About 200 YAF members were on hand to see Fred Lockwood tug Yandee Doodle Dandy out on the North ramp, Saturday, May 19, 1984, at 1435 Zulu time. Cameras were all ready as usual. The C-47 crew was excited as can be — you could tell by the way they were walking 6 inches off the ramp: They knew that their plane was ready to fly!

The C-47 crew worked very hard every week, stretching into months, and thousands of man hours during the past year. *"I know!"* I used to stop by the hangar after work to see the crew still hard at work, cold as can be, dressed in snowmobile suits, gloves, winter boots, etc. With a small portable air compressor, work bench, and drop lights, they plugged away each day. Bill Abbott kept the coffee pot hot and helped too. **If I may,** I would like to tip my cap to the C-47 crew: *"You guys are just GREAT."*

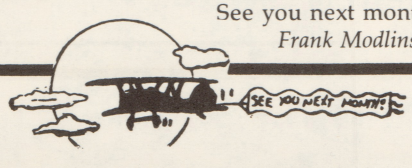
Capt. Ed.F. Johns, Pilot, YAF #1561, with First Officer Richard Bodycomb, YAF #1230, Co-Pilot, climbed aboard along with First Officer Dan Harner, and Russ Purchase (Russ came down from Saginaw Division) to preflight the Yankee Doodle Dandy. The plane taxied to runway 21 Right, poised and looked proud. At 1705 Zulu time, Yankee Doodle Dandy lifted off and everyone cheered. She came by again for a low fly-by and cameras were clicking away!

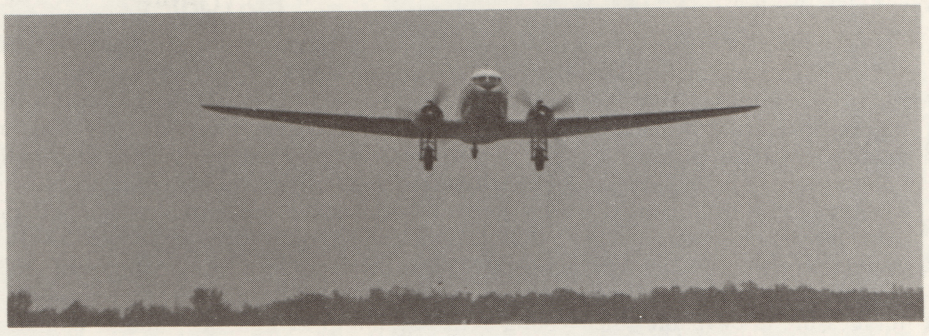
On May 20th, Capt. Ed. Johns, Dick Bodycombe, crew chief Fred Lockwood, and crewman Bill Ray had their first mission to Flint Division's Fly-in Breakfast.

On May 12, Saginaw Division showed up with Trueman "Sy" Thompson, YAF #1661; Joseph Brown, YAF #1706; Velda Hammerbacker, YAF #1748; Karen Runie, YAF #1648, along with her son little Ray; and Dale Mikesell, YAF #1589. These fine members started restoration work on our reception/office room located on the southwest side of our hangar. Terrific guys and gals!! Hope to see you again soon.

We have a new pilot in the Yankee Air Force, Joanne Daniels, YAF #1243, (Graphic Artist for our YAF publication) received her wings this past March. Congratulations Joannie!

See you next month,
Frank Modlinski





The "Yankee Doodle Dandy" coming in for a landing on her maiden flight. (Photo by C.L. Ray, YAF Photo Committee.)

PURCHASE TO FLYING STATUS OF THE C-47

From the idea first conceived in late fall 1982 and subsequent purchase from ERIM, C-47 N8704 transferred from a dream to flying reality. In December 1982, a maintenance program following the Air Force card controlled system was initiated along with time controlled "special" inspections and compliance with A.D. notes, (Airworthiness Directives). Ron Haviland, directing the maintenance program, and Fred Lockwood, supervising, with crewmen, Charlie Greenwald, Bill Ray, Pat Nugent and Norm Ellickson, the basic inspections of engines and airframe was completed in two months.

The next item was, in order to certificate the aircraft from "General Category" use, the two 6 foot long X 26" wide cut outs in the center fuselage belly would have to be re-built to original specification so that original flooring could be installed and thereafter, the original seats. The local FAA was very encouraging and helpful in restoring this aircraft back to original configuration. Once this plan was in place, the services of Ellen Kurath, a YAF member and local airframe repair consultant and Aeronautical Engineer were called upon. From her drawings the belly repair was explicitly followed. Ron Ridenour joined in the crew and the next 3-4 weeks were spent in removal of the ERIM equipment well installation, of which there are two barrels full of sheet metal! Next the painstaking belly re-building began and the job was finished in September 1983. But knowing full well the a/c was far from flying status and fly-ins and air shows were nearly over for another year, we gave a tentative completion date of Spring, 1984.

At this time the right side aft fuselage skin was replaced, mostly for cosmetic purposes, flooring was located in San Antonio, Texas, cleaned, painted and fitted. In March, 1984, the metal troop bench fold-up seats were located and acquired in Tuson, Arizona. Carpenter, Ray Gillman then started to make a wooden fly-away box. Meanwhile in February the aircraft was weighed and in March both props were removed, inspected by H.& S. Prop Shop in Pontiac and re-installed on the a/c. At this point a complete engine run was required, and also to check out the props, except for one small problem — the left engine wouldn't run. After much thawing with a portable heater (on a very cold day) it was determined that water had entered the left carburetor, frozen and damaged it. (Why not, at 21° below zero). The carburetor was replaced and fuel lines were purged.

Ron Ridenour, the Smith brothers, Lester and Larry, Jim Shepard, Olif Parks, Norm Jones, Earl Hewitt, Ron Hall and Mike Willmann all spent hours hand-sanding the existing paint, buffing bare aluminum, marking off and finally painting. And did it look great afterward! Added weight painted was 66 pounds. And then on Monday, May 14th, the maintenance run-up was accomplished, minor adjustments made and old N8704 was run again on Wednesday, May 16th, with FAA inspector John Taylor and passed with ease. Next the final paperwork was drawn up, certificate of Airworthiness applied for and granted, Form 337 repair document completed, all necessary licenses secured and the a/c weight and balance computed and 850 lbs. ballast added. Special thanks to "Red" Parton for gas and oil and the "Yankee Flyers," also all the other donations that were gratefully accepted. On test hop, four pilots were qualified without a hitch on Saturday, May 19th. The next day saw "old Gooney" to Flint, Michigan for the fly-in — the first flight since April 8th, 1981.

Special thanks to and not previously mentioned: The pilots — Ed Johns, Richard Bodycombe, Russ Purchase and Don Harner; Ted Vedrody, C-47 stock control; Larry Silver, Frank Modlinski, Ray Gillman, Bill Wier, John Spellich, Russ Kenyon, Dave Wheeler, Bill Abbott, Don Burke, Dennis Norton, T.J. Wilkins, Richard Hapunowicz, ERIM, General Motors, Sundog Electronics, Pentastar Inc., Republic Airlines and Zantop Airlines — and I certainly hope I have not overlooked anyone.

Fred Lockwood,
Crew Chief for the C-47

BUFF BRIEFS

Restoration work on "Clyde" is progressing well, especially, with the warm weather upon us. Crew members responsible for the cockpit area have completed taping seams of the floor padding and all sharp edges. This will provide some added strength and protection to this "well-visited" area. The entire B-52 crew would like to remind all members that — THE COCKPIT SEATS ARE OFF-LIMITS DURING ALL TOURS — We are trying to maintain complete "authenticity" within the aircraft and people crawling in and out of these seats, puts unneccessary wear-n-tear on the materials. Please — this plane is for display purposes only, and must be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

The drag chute pack has been refilled and replaced in the chute compartment, thanks to Jeff Waterbury. The drag chute, itself, will be donated to the Museum for display purposes.

Oil, to provide ballast in the drop tanks, has been steadily arriving thanks to fellow members. There are approximately 300 gallons in the left drop tank, and we still need donations. (Keep it coming, folks.)

Two ambitious crew members have been spending their spare time during the day installing screens over all vents and openings. Jerry Ellen and Jeff Waterbury have undertaken this task and have been evicting birds from the majority of openings. Great going, guys!

Gust locks have been installed on all control surfaces for the sole purpose of preventing the wind from playing havoc with the vertical stabilizer and ailerons.

Work is progressing on the pad. We would like to thank Jack Spanich for surveying the area, and the layout of the pad and approach ramp. By the time this is published, we hope to have the pad cemented and finished. This will be Clyde's permanent home.

As of April 20th, we have received written waivers preventing further removal of equipment from the aircraft. This ISL also, authorization to begin the task of requesting instrumentation and equipment from Wright-Patterson to finalize restoration of the aircraft. The Crew Chiefs and Team Leaders of the B-52 Crew will begin to compile necessary lists to obtain instrumentation, equipment, and materials from Wright-Patterson. We are hoping to obtain guns or gun barrels for the turret and pylons, bomb racks for the wings and bomb bay area.

In the months ahead, we plan on an added feature in "BUFF BRIEFS." We will be highlighting various systems and parts of the aircraft written by our crewmembers. (A real educational experience for all!)

Anyone interested in the B-52 Crew, call the Crew Chief or Assistant Crew Chief for further information.

View of the crowd, at the B-52 Dedication. With the YAF's "Yankee Doodle Dandy" in the right foreground, then right to left: the YAF B-52 and our F-101 "Voodoo." (Photo by C.L. Ray, YAF Photo Committee.)

Ron Heinlein delivering the message from Gov. James J. Blanchard at the Dedication Ceremonies for the YAF B-52. (Photo by C.L. Ray, YAF Photo Committee.)

B-52 CREW ANNOUNCES CHANGES

Memorial Day commemorated not only the dedication of "Clyde," but marked some new changes in the B-52 crew. Rich Carpenter has decided to relinquish his Crew Chief position to devote more time to Ramp Crew activities. Hank Koski, former Assistant Crew Chief, has taken over as the B-52's new Crew Chief. We wish to extend our sincere gratitude to Rich for all his ideas, suggestions, and time he's spent with the Aircraft. Without his knowledge and expertise many of the crew's projects would never have transpired. He will still remain an integral part of our crew, and act as a liaison between Wurtsmith AFB and the crew. Earl Loeffler is the new Assistant Crew Chief and Jim Ture has taken over Earl's Team Leader position. Congratulations are in order for all!

Toni Koski #0469

Y.A.F. B52 DEDICATION

Today a Stratofortress flew
O'er Willow Run
Below, our own Black Warrior
It's duty done;
Disarmed and silent on the ground
To represent,
All Southeast Asia planes and crews,
A monument.
The Yankee Airforce gathered there
Beneath the wings,
And veterans groups, whose presence adds
To solemn things,
One more deserving tribute to
Our Nations' Brave;
Those who lived, and those who lie
In Foreign Grave.

Graham Armstrong
#1322

RETAIL SALES REPORT

Retail Sales announces it's new hours for spring and summer 1984. We will be open for business on Saturdays (10 to 4) and Sundays (11 to 2). Come over and take a look at all the Yankee Air Force merchandise for sale. We have just acquired the new B-52 T-shirts just in time for summer wear. There's a choice of dark blue or white, silk-screen designed, and comes in all sizes for $6.00. Pick up a few of the new button pins ($1.00) to decorate your YAF hat or shirt. These buttons come in your choice of YAF logo, C-47, AD-4 Skyraider, and AT-6. Don't forget to browse through our collection of Squadron-Signal publications ($5.00 each) an excellent source of information for all aviation buffs! Remember: Buying a YAF T-shirt, hat, bumper sticker, or button not only supports the group, but helps to promote the YAF. Stop by, when you're visiting (or working) at the hangar to browse around. Bring a friend!!

Anyone interested in working retail sales please contact Vivian Willman at 728-0419. There is no experience required — all you need is a smile and the desire to work with others. We have some big events coming up in the next few months which include: The Ypsilanti Heritage Festival and Founder's Day — to name a few. Here's your chance to get involved with some great people for a great cause — our Yankee Air Force.

Toni Koski #0469

SALVAGE REPORT

I have been trying to sell 2 tons of newspapers each month and this month we really came through. We sold 4 tons-420 lbs. of newspapers.

Ken Mullins again brought in over 600 lbs. Thanks again, Ken!

The Salvage Department sure has missed Henry Grudzien, Sr., who has been ill for the past two months. Hurry and get well, Henry — we all miss you.

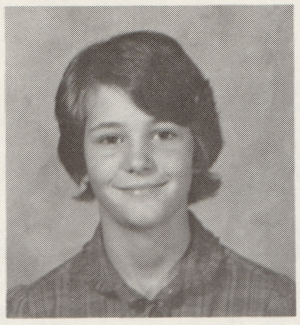
Special thanks to the two Grudzien brothers, YAF #147 and #359, and all the other members who helped in some way in the Salvage Department in May. They helped make $140.50 on the sale of newspapers for that month.

Bill Abbott is running a fund-raising campaign to pay off the 1978 Ford Stake Truck, which the YAF is purchasing thanks to Bill's quick action. Please drop by the kitchen and give him your donation and get your receipt.

Bob Bell, YAF #1266, has agreed to check over the truck and repair anything that needs repairing.

I will be spending a month in Northern Michigan, so will see you all in July.

John Spellich #432



YANKEE AIR FORCE GOPHER NO. 2: GALE GLOVER

Introducing ... Miss Gale Anne Glover — another way in which the Yankee Air Force is blessed with the spirit of youth within its membership. Gale is the 11-year-old daughter of Olif and Barbara Parks, #761 and #762, respectively. She is also one of our true-blue Yankee Air Force Gophers.

The record shows that Gale is very handy at lending a hand, which is one reason she is such a good person to have around the YAF Hangar or any other place where a YAF function is in progress. There are other reasons: such as her innate friendliness, warm smile, and boundless (most of the time) energy.

Last Founders Day found Gale setting up tables and chairs in the Hangar, and later helping to take them all down. And, of course, there were the inevitable Gopher errands for Gale to run during the dance that evening.

Like Nicole Loeffler, Gale has helped to handle some of the kitchen chores for Bill Abbott, frequently on Saturdays. And she was part of the Yankee Air Force volunteer group that worked on the Channel 56 Festival '84 fund drive last March. The YAF News Distribution Committee often needs extra help in getting our monthly publication ready to mail, and Gale has been there to help on several occasions.

Gale lives with her parents in Van Buren Township, in the vicinity of the Yankee Air Force Hangar. Her father, Olif Parks, is a member of the C-47 Maintenance Crew and the Ramp Crew. Barbara, her mother, is our Social Events Chairperson and Supplies Chairperson.

Gale is a fifth grade student at the Quirk Road Elementary School. Her favorite subject is math — at which she excels.

Gale Glover loves sports — especially baseball (some boys have a hard time matching her on the ballfield). Put her on a pair of roller skates or a bicycle and she'll be quite happy, too. If she's not involved in some sports activity, you might find Gale listening to her Michael Jackson records or tapes, or babysitting for one of her regular customers. She also is a member of the Rainbow Girls.

Sam Stephens

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

The Membership Committee would like to stress to everyone the importance of using the proper channels for handling membership applications and renewal forms. To assure that all memberships are processed in a timely fashion, any membership monies, whether it be for a new member or for a renewing member, MUST be submitted to a member of the Membership Committee. The Membership Committee members can be identified by a red tag which says "MEMBERSHIP" on it. In the past, there have been several memberships lost in the shuffle. If you need to renew or happen to have a new member's application and dues, please make sure that you turn it in to a member of the Committee.

The Membership Committee bulletin board will be on display by the end of May. If you have any suggestions or questions for the Committee, feel free to attach them to the board. A roster of the Membership Committee will be posted for everyone's information.

BOOKKEEPER OR RECORD KEEPER WANTED

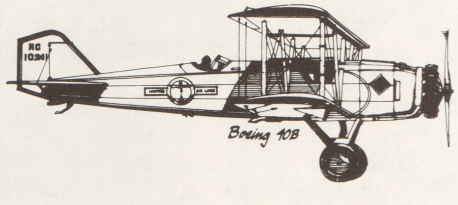
To help the Treasurer with record keeping for Yankee Air Force Headquarters, and all Divisions, Retail Sales and all events. Some record keeping experience necessary. Part-time position.

For more information, or if interested please call me — Nancy Lockwood, Treasurer, 482-4120 or Hangar 483-4030.

"FOR SPECIAL EVENTS"

Many special events are scheduled for this summer in the hangar and out of town. If you have **any spare time** and you would like to help out either in the Retail Sales area — contact Vivian Willman - Chairman, 728-0419, or Louise Greenwald - Director, 421-7374; or in Finance (cashiers for beer, food, etc.) — contact Louise, or Nancy Lockwood, Treasurer, 482-4120.

There are a **great group** of gals and a few guys in these areas who will work right along with you (these are the regulars), so if you just want to help out a time or two, or jump right in with us, you are **more than welcome.** COME JOIN US AND SEE WHAT IS GOING ON!!



YAF LIBRARY HIGHLIGHTS

When the Yankee Air Force opened its door for the first time on Saturday, May 5th, it held a greater surprise for the Librarian than for its first patrons. It seems the Museum work crew, headed by Bill Lary, had installed a whole wall of "new" glass-doored bookshelves in the hours just prior to opening. The surprised voice of Librarian Barb Cook was heard coming out of the workroom saying, *"It actually looks like a library now!"*

Our Museum stevedores, Russ Maxwell, Les Reakes, Todd Hackbarth, and Richard Brace, had driven up to Flint, manhandled the donated furniture into a rented truck, and brought it home where it is now protecting our Museum artifacts and books. Those YAF members who haven't visited the Library or Museum recently will be delighted with our new professional look and the two new rooms: B-24 and YAF. Keep those donations coming — we're making use of them.

The first echelon of Library staff emerged in May to open for Saturday visitors. Hal Sherman, YAF #932, has organized many of the historic magazines while on duty, Genevieve Sanders has worked multiple shifts alphabetizing the card catalog, and K. Miller got broken-in Memorial Day. (We are, alas, forced to share her with Retail Sales.) There are probably YAF members or spouses out there who aren't already committed to another project at YAF and could consider the Library/Museum their first priority. We'd love to meet you. Call Barb Cook, Librarian, 769-2432, or Phil Lundy, Historian, 455-4640. (See other article for list of projects.)

FRIENDS OF AVIATION (Library Members) have gotten off to a good start with a baker's dozen members in their first month. This gives the Library a better financial position, but they look forward to more "FRIENDS with $10" as well as library users.

B. Cook, Librarian

LIBRARY/MUSEUM PROJECTS NEED PEOPLE

1. Typist
2. Organizer of "WISH LIST" card file
3. Lister of aviation museums
4. Plastic "dymo" label maker
5. Security staff for Saturdays (12-2 P.M.)
6. Security staff for Sundays & Air Shows (2 hour shifts)
7. "Stencil" sign maker
8. Book repair person
9. "Bulletin Type" style typist and use of machine

Many of these jobs can be done at home and most skills are self-taught after a single training session. If these sound interesting, call Barb Cook, Librarian, 769-2432, or Phil Lundy, Historian, 455-4640.

BOOK REVIEW

ACES OF THE SOUTHWEST PACIFIC by Gene B, Stafford. Squadron/Signal, 1977. 64 pages, paperback, black and white photos, color illustrations, $6.95.

Gene Stafford has gathered brief biographies of each of the aces of the six American Air Forces (5th, 7th, 10th, 13th, 14th, and 20th) serving in the Southwest Pacific in World War II. Alongside the biographical sketches are photos of each man with his plane. There is never a stilted press photo, but pages of crisp snapshots of pilots in casual attire, complete with that famous smile. Stafford simply pairs up these facts and photos, allowing the reader to easily devour the sparse words, and search for more meaning among the pictures. There is a lot to be read in those old photos.

It is only after you put "Aces . . ." down that your mind starts to ponder what an awesome task these young men accomplished. You can't forget those proud grinning faces next to their "Itsy Bitsys" and "Beautiful Lasses." These pilots each summoned up the "Right Stuff" that Tom Wolf has only recently put into words for us.

Stafford reminds that it was not over Europe, but in the Pacific that the most ferocious aerial combat of World War II was fought. These Air Forces started out in the first P-40s (P-35s and P-39s too), but by the close of the war they were painting their rows of Japanese flags on the sides of P-38s and P-51s. Don Greer's colorful drawings of these personalized aircraft inspire even me to finish painting my P-47 model in the colors of Maj. Alvaro J. Hunter's "My Baby." Greer has arranged special cut-away views of the P-38 Lightning so that the outboard engine doesn't obscure your view of the fuselage artwork.

I attempted to compare "Aces . . ." with a seemingly similar book donated to the YAF Library by the Ford Aerosports Club entitled, "Aces of the Air" by Francis K. Mason. But Mason's treatment of aces proved far broader, including aviation greats from Bleriot and W.W. I dog-fighters up through Viet Nam War jet-fighter ace Randy Cunningham. Mason's "Aces of the Air" is a wonderful introduction to military aviation history, with facts for both aircraft fanciers and historians. It is a glossy, colorful "coffee-table" style book.

Stafford's "Aces . . ." confines itself to American aces in one air theatre. Neither its subject not its format are pretentious. It is for the patriot, military history buff, or anybody who has wondered what it was like to be an ordinary guy who joined up when his country needed him, learned how to fly, went overseas, and then discovered that he had whatever it takes to not only fly that machine and get back alive, but to actually out-fly the enemy and down him. He did this again and again. These men got called "aces," were given medals, discharges, and then sent back home like the rest. Nobody wrote glossy coffee table books about them. They're just Americans with the "Right Stuff" who did their jobs. But what makes them different than you or me? Does it show in those photos?

B. Cook, Librarian #1041

HALT'S MAUL!

Spitfire pilot Richard Hillary, in his book, **Falling Through Space**, tells the following anecdote, which happened to him during the Battle of Britain. In August, 1940, 603 Squadron was scrambled to intercept an incoming German raid. *"And then quite clearly over the radio I heard the Germans excitedly calling to each other. This was a not infrequent occurence and it made one feel that they were right behind, although often they were some distance away. I switched my set to "send"* and called out *"Halt's Maul!"* and as many other choice pieces of German invectives as I could remember. To my delight I heard one of them answer: *"You feelthy Englishmen, we will teach you how to speak to a German."* I am aware that this sounds a tall story, but several others in the Squadron were listening out and heard the whole thing."

Jim Hanford

YAF MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The Membership Committee is kicking off a Divisional Membership Recruiting Drive. The Division that signs up the most new members between now and September 15, 1984, will be presented with a plaque on Founder's Day, September 22, 1984. Use the enclosed application to kick off your campaign for the Divisional Membership Drive. More applications are available through National.

Hear ye! YAF'ers
Recruiting is the theme;
July, August and September
More hands on every team.
Keep applications handy,
And advertise our goals;
With each Division working,
We expand our member rolls.
A plaque will be presented
To the winner Founder's Day.
Let's do our friends a favor,
YAF is here to stay.

Graham Armstrong #1322

MICHAEL ERARD

Most aviation buffs would probably envy Michael Erard, YAF #812, because he has done so much and lived to tell about it. He learned to fly in 1926, during aviation's "Golden Age"; he was a barnstormer, and the owner/operator of a charter service. He believes he is the only American ever to serve as a pilot in four different air forces — count 'em: the Michigan Air National Guard, the French Air Force, the U.S. Army Air Force, and the U.S. Naval Air Force. And he has, over a 53-year career, logged well over 14,000 hours in nearly 200 different aircraft types — **without an accident!**

Michael Rene Erard was born in 1908 on a farm near Sandusky, Michigan, six years after his father emigrated from France. He recalls the day he was in the field when a squadron of P-1s from Selfridge Field flew over, *"... and it just caught on right there, that that's what I wanted to do."* At 17 he went to Detroit and got a job at Studebaker Motors, testing engines, to earn enough money for flying lessons. In June, 1926, he took up flying, and soloed ofter 3½ hours.

While working at various jobs, he spent many week-ends during the next four years taking aviation to the rural areas. The usual procedure was to pick a town of roughly 5,000 people, and look for a new-mown field from which to operate. A couple of dollars usually got the farmer's permission, and a few passes over the town got the public's attention. Then he hoped enough folks bought rides to cover expenses and a little more. He bought his first airplane — a Piper Cub — in 1929.

But Mike wanted to fly more than just weekends. He applied for a flying job at the WACO Aircraft Factory, but did not have enough hours. Then in hopes of flying for the military, he enlisted as a private in the 107th Observation Squadron of the Michigan Air National Guard, stationed at Detroit City Airport. As he had the minimum 200 hours of flying experience, he was permitted to take the Guard's flight training syllabus. No sooner had he completed it, however, and received his commission as a second lieutenant, than he was placed on reserve status. Realizing that he was back to weekend flying, he decided to offer his services to the French Air Force, because of his French parentage.

In hindsight it is obvious that he hadn't considered the odds against it. First he had to cajole the French Consul in Detroit to write a request on his behalf. Several months passed before he received his acceptance. On October 27, 1933, Erard debarked at Le Havre, France. He spoke no French, he knew no one, and he had $37 in his pocket. So he found his way to Paris, and then to Le Bourget Airport, where units of the French Air Force were stationed. Through an interpreter he explained to the

French Air Attache, Major General Andre Ortolo (left) pins France's highest non-combat decoration — the Air Medal — on Cdr. Michael Erard, December 16, 1983. (M. Erard collection.)

Mike Erard on his 26th birthday, October, 1934. The instruments were placed in the wing of the MS 230 trainor, so they could be seen from both cockpits. (M. Erard collection.)

Air Commander why he had come. Having no previous knowledge of Erard's coming, the C.O. decided the first order of business should be a flying test.

That afternoon Mike was assigned for a check flight with a squadron pilot. The pilot explained through the interpreter that he would execute a maneuver, and then Mike should repeat it. As Erard settled into the cockpit, another surprise awaited him — all the instruments read in Metric! Of that day he recalls that it was a lengthy flight; his mind was exhausted in converting between English and Metric values; and upon landing the check pilot told his C.O., *"Erard flies just like we do."* He didn't know if it was a criticism or a compliment.

A short time later Erard became a private for the second time. Since he couldn't speak French, he spent the next six months in language school, and worked on airplanes in his spare time. On May 1, 1934, he was among 19 candidates reporting to flight school at Istres, in southern France. All the students had had previous flying experience, so more check rides were scheduled. In a matter of days, the class was reduced to five. Three months later Michael Erard received his certificate and a second lieutenancy. The total elapsed time from his arrival in Le Havre was just under a year.

In mid-October, 1934, Erard reported to the 7th Escadre, the "Black Panther" squadron, at Dijon. His first aircraft was a Wiebault fighter, however, he soon moved up to the Neiuport 622. The squadron strength was 12 aircraft and pilots, who usually flew in 3-plane vees. All intra-plane communications were by hand signals — there were no radios.

Mike transferred in February, 1937, to a ready reserve group at Villacoublay, outside Paris. About half the pilots were on active duty, and the remainder were part-time reservists. With the completion of his contract in December, Erard opted for a discharge, and returned to the U.S. The majority of his flying time during his four years in France was logged in seven aircraft types: Caudron 59, Marane-Saulnier 225 and 230, Potez 25, Breguet 19, Nieuport 622, and Dewoitine 500.

Back in the States, Erard tried again to enlist in the Air Corps, however at 28 he was too old. He joined Lockheed Aircraft Corp. as a flight test pilot for Lockheed models 10, 12, and 14. Early 1939 saw him in the co-pilots' school for TWA. Later that year the U.S. Army Air Corps advertised for qualified pilots to serve as instructors for the impending expansion. This time he was badly needed, and he trained Army pilots until January 1943. That's when Erard, now an Army captain, traded his silver wings for the golden wings of a naval aviator.

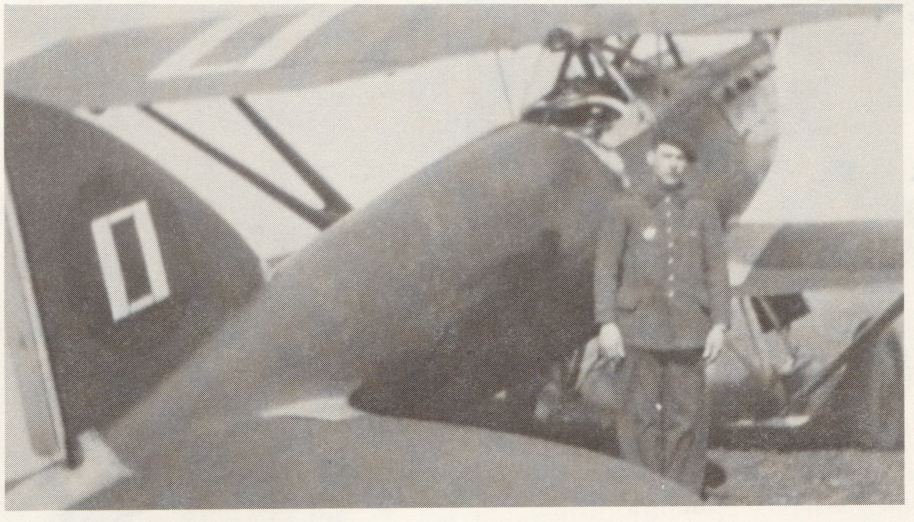
The Navy was about to begin training pilots for the Free French Naval Forces. Someone had discovered Erard's background, and had figured he was the ideal man to run the program. In the two years that he was in charge, about half of the roughly 600 students earned their wings. With a vivid memory of his experience when the rules were reversed a decade before, Mike set up extra instruction in the evenings, where he gave personal attention to weak students. Many graduates became the nucleus of the post-war French Naval Air Arm.

When World War II ended, Erard was the Commanding Officer of Cambat Aircraft Service Unit 31 at Hilo, Hawaii. CASU 31's last assignment was to segregate their aircraft into two groups: those to be retained for the post-war Navy, and those to be melted into aluminum ingots. Mike stayed in the Navy, holding various assignments, including a tour at Grosse Ile Naval Air Station, where he learned to fly jets. In 1954, he transferred to the Naval Air Reserve, serving until his retirement from the Navy in 1963. During this period he also founded the Serve All Air Charter Service at Metro Airport. In 1963, he sold it, and joined Ford Motor Company, retiring from there in 1973.

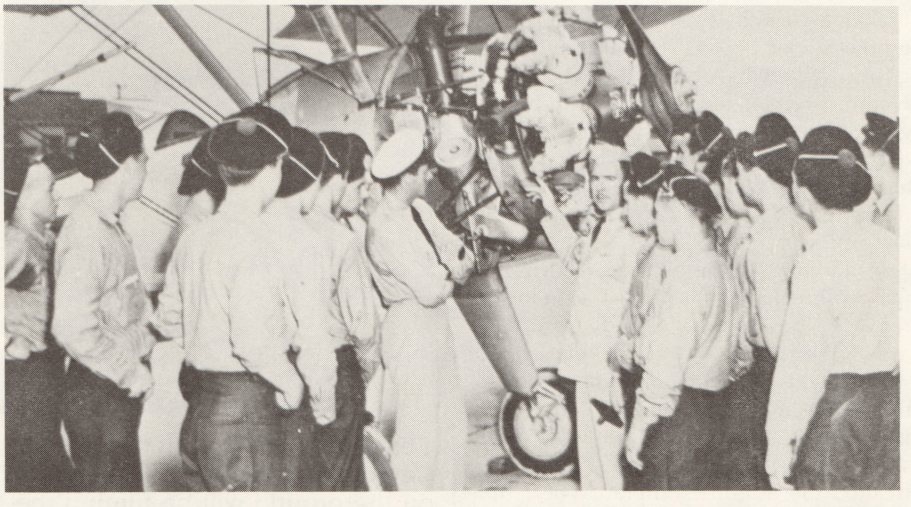
As a result of an eye injury, Mike flew an airplane for the last time June 6, 1979, but he is far from retired. He belongs to many aviation-related organizations, and each year in May he returns to Dijon for a reunion with the five remaining members of the Black Panther Squadron of the '30s. On December 16, 1983, in a ceremony at the U.S. Air Force Museum, he received France's highest non-combat decoration — the Air Medal. Erard is the only American to have served in the French Air Force since the World War I service of the Lafayette Escadrille.

Mike has lived in Southgate for the last 34 years. With his wife Norma, he also enjoys the time spent with their six children and five grandchildren. A sign on the wall in his basement museum says it all — *"You never fail until you stop trying."*

Jim Hanford



Erard with his Nieuport 622, which he flew with the "Black Panthers." (M. Erard collection.)



Erard conducts a class on the engine of an N2S for Free French student pilots. (M. Erard collection.)

TEN MILES HIGH

He was an American, born and raised in Detroit. His father worked for Ford Motor Company. In 1931, with his father, he journeyed to far off Russia, to be with his father, as his father and others helped to build a Ford Plant in the Soviet Union. He was barely into his teens when he arrived in Russia. He was to spend a total of 45 years in the Soviet Union; 18 of them in a Stalinist prison. He was an acclaimed hero in his early years in Russia; he set many altitude records as what is now known as a sky diver, or parachutist. In 1976 he returned to the land of his birth, along with his beautiful wife, Galina, their two beautiful daughters and his wife's elderly mother. His name is: Victor Herman.

Victor Herman, who, during his jumps in and for the Soviet Union was known as Russia's Lindbergh.

In late July 1984, a team of sky divers known as Ten Miles High are going to honor Victor Herman and our country by breaking the altitude record, currently held by the Soviet Union. They are not merely going to just barely break the altitude record, or even only **that** record, but are going to better the Soviets by more than ten thousand feet! When the team exits their aircraft, they will literally be doing so at the edge of space; more than 55,000 feet up!

In addition to the altitude record, they will be breaking or setting the following records: the daytime altitude record for men; the daytime altitude record for women; the nighttime altitude record for men; the nighttime altitude record for women. These additional records will be set by this team: the largest mass exit, (team); the altitude, (aircraft/type); time to climb, (aircraft/type); speed over a measured distance, (aircraft/type).

Home Town Hero

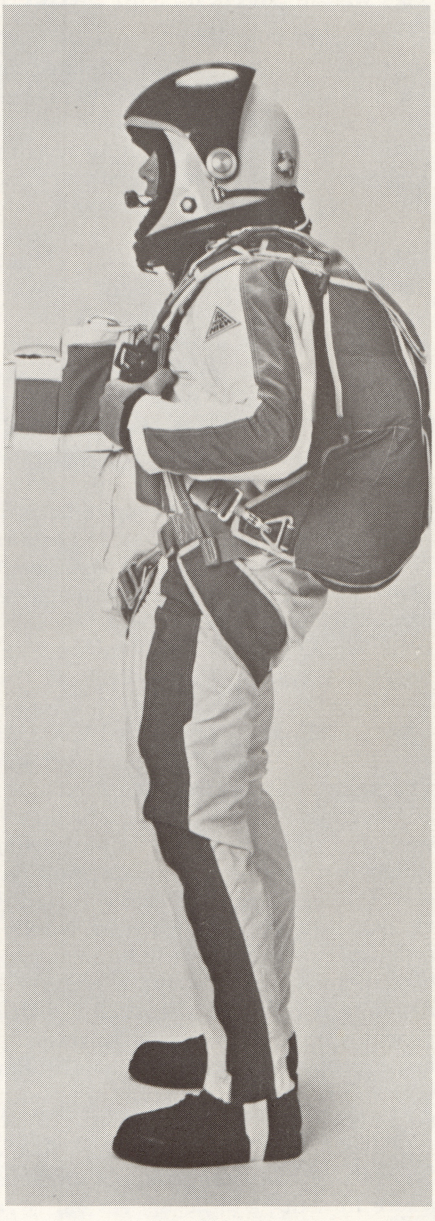
For those of us who live, lived or grew up in Belleville, Michigan, this event holds special significance, since the Team Leader is Barry Lastinger, son of Mr. and Mrs. Barney Lastinger of Belleville. Barry hasn't just made a few jumps in his life either, he has more than 30 hours in freefall alone! He has been a skydiver since 1962 and has made more than 3,400 jumps! *(Editor's note: the photo that graces this months YAF News cover, is Barry in one of the prototype Team pressure suits).* The Ten Miles High Team, of which Barry is the leader and the founder, will consist of ten men and ten women, all highly experienced skydivers.

The Equipment

The pressure suits are custom designed to the specifications required for a jump at this altitude by Life Support Systems, Inc., Mountain View, CA and are to be made in France by Aerazure EFA. The aircraft is a custom reworked Boeing 720-B, (the Air Crew consists of Capt. Chuck Hall, aircraft commander, currently a pilot for Japan Air Lines; Capt. Claus Kochseik, co-pilot, of West Germany; and Flt. Eng. John McEveoy). Parachute equipment is provided by FXC Guardian Parachute Corp. of Santa Ana, CA. Physical training is provided by Gideon Ariel, PhD, of the Coto Research Center, Trabuco Canyon, CA.

Doctor Ariel has custom designed many of the testing machines used by the Team in their preparations — the machines and equipment were designed and built just for the Ten Miles High event. High altitude physiology is provided by William J. Sears, of Technology Incorporated, San Antonio, TX — Mr. Sears has also designed and built machinery to assist the Team in preparing themselves for this historic event. The drop zone for the series of jumps is the Naval Air Station, El Centro, CA. Medical support is being provided by Capt. William Lott, USN, of the Naval Air Station at El Centro and by Robert May of the Physiological Flight Training Unit, Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX. The Team is also receiving assistance from the US Navy "Blue Angels" Flight Demonstration Squadron. The custom designed pressure suits and custom

The Cameraman, with the still and film cameras affixed to his helmet. The Cameraman is essentially the 21st Team member. Yet other video cameras on the ground will be filming the Team's descent. The completed video, motion picture and still film is slated to be part of a nationally televised special about the event.



designed space helmets (designed by Barry Lastinger), and all the other equipment is going to be donated to various air and space museums around the country following the completion of the jumps.

The Event

The Jump is actually a series of jumps, spanning a period of three days and three nights. On the day of the first jump the Team will exit the aircraft at an altitude of about 25,000 feet in the afternoon; then after dark, the Team will jump at the same altitude. The following day, the Team will jump in the afternoon and after dark from an altitude of 45,000 feet. On the third day, the Team will perform the jump from which they've taken their name; in the afternoon they will exit their specially equipped Boeing 720-B at an altitude of ten miles — the very edge of space! They will make the same jump after dark!

The Team will honor not only Victor Herman and his indomitable spirit, but the United States of America. Proving yet again that others can do it, but America and Americans do it better!

John W. Syler, IV

The officers and members of the Yankee Air Force salute these daring American men and women! As the Editor of the Yankee Air Force News, I wish to personally thank Mr. and Mrs. Lastinger, for granting the YAF News this exclusive story; appearing in our pages before any other publication in our area of the USA.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?

The world doesn't care
What you're going to do,
It wants to know
What you have done;
For the castles so fair
That you build in the air,
Are vague till the battle is won.

So it might be well to look back
O'er the past,
At the things
You have hoped to do.
At the close of each day,
Can you honestly say,
That some of your dreams have come true?

Submitted by Bill Abbott

MADE IN MICHIGAN
PLANE PORTRAITS BY PAULEY

This month we describe a series of flying boats and amphibians designed and built in Detroit during the 1929 to 1932 era. These interesting aircraft evolved from the fertile mind of Tom Towle, an Aeronautical Engineer, whose career literally spanned the age of powered flight, from the Wrights to modern day aircraft.

Tom Towle's association with aviation dates back to his early youth and America's first aviators, the Wright brothers. He was born in 1897 and raised in Dayton, Ohio, only a few blocks from the Wright Cycle Shop located at 1127 West Third Street in Dayton. This is the same building that is now preserved at Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. Young Tom often took his bicycle to the Wright shop to have repairs made or punctures fixed and became familiar with the aeronautical experiments of the two brothers. He had vivid memories of trips made out into the country when his father would take the family by horse and buggy to watch the Wrights fly. Later Tom Towle left Dayton and went to New Haven, Connecticut, where he entered Yale University, and in June, 1920, graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mechanical Engineering. A month after graduation he was back in Dayton working for the Dayton-Wright Airplane Company under the direction of Orville Wright and Charles Kettering. He remained there for two years, working on a variety of projects including a number of seaplanes and the Dayton-Wright RB Racer that raced in the 1920 Gordon Bennett Cup Race in France. This was the first airplane with a fully retractable landing gear and is now on display in the Henry Ford Museum.

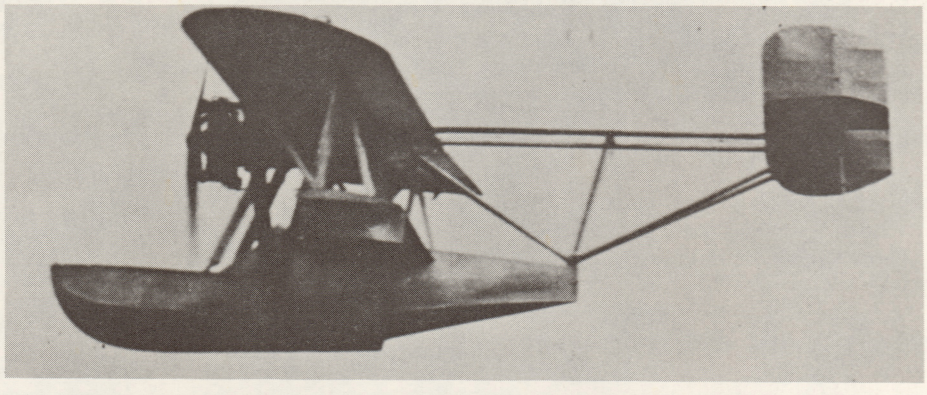
In 1922, Tom Towle moved on to the Glenn L. Martin Company in Cleveland, where he helped to design several large military torpedo bombers. At Martin he was associated with some of the true pioneers of aviation — Glenn L. Martin, Donald Douglas, Larry Bell and "Dutch" Kindleberger.

By 1924, he had moved again, to the Aeromarine Company in Keyport, New Jersey, where he assisted in the design of the first American flying boat with an all-metal hull.

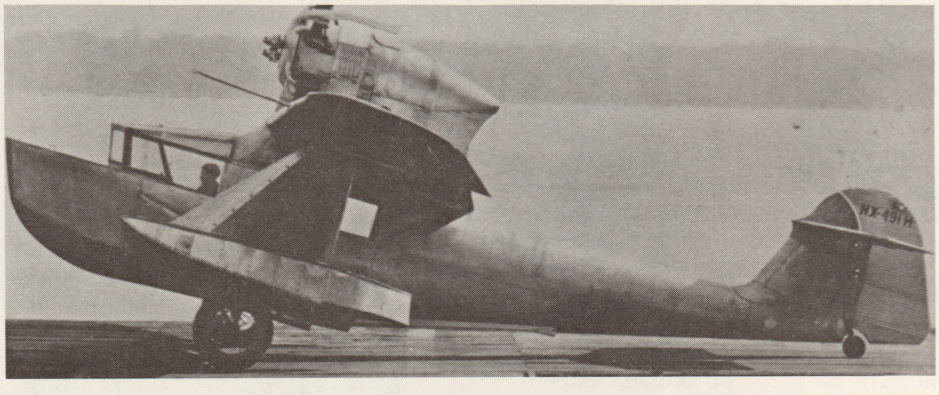
Following that, Tom Towle moved to Michigan, where he was hired by William B. Stout as Assistant Chief Engineer for the Stout Metal Airplane Company. There he worked on the Liberty engine powered Stout Air Pullman and later a version of the Air Pullman powered by three Wright J-4 engines that Stout had built as the first Tri-motor design. However, in July 1925, Henry Ford bought the Stout Metal Airplane Company and so this first Tri-motor was actually completed as a Ford airplane. After a few hair-raising test flights, it became obvious that the design was a failure and Henry Ford expressed his disappointment with Stout's proposal. Soon after the test flights, on Sunday, January 16, 1926, there was a "mysterious" fire of "unexplained origin" and the Stout hangar burned to the ground including the prototype Tri-motor and three Stout Air Pullmans. Following that fire, Ford sent Bill Stout on a nationwide lecture tour, and in the meantime asked Tom Towle, who had been hired as Chief Engineer of the Ford Aviation Division, to design and build a new Tri-motor. Thus it was that the Ford Tri-motor that we know so well today was actually conceived, designed, engineered and stress-analyzed by 29-year-old Tom Towle without any help or interference from Bill Stout. By the time Stout had returned from his extended lecture tour promoting aviation, the Ford Tri-motor was well on its way to completion and Bill Stout had made very few contributions to the design. Tom Towle continued to develop and improve the Tri-motor, preparing it for production, while Stout occupied himself with promoting the Stout Air Service, which was to use the new Ford Tri-motors. By 1927, production had reached a peak and the Tri-motor was on its way to making aviation history. Many are still flying to this day — a lasting tribute to Tom Towle's engineering talents.

In late 1929, Tom Towle left Ford to form his own aircraft company, the Towle Marine Aircraft Engineering Company in Detroit to specialize in the design, engineering and building of flying boats and amphibious aircraft. Towle's first contract was from Paul Strassburg, a wealthy and well-known society dance instructor and dance hall operator in the Detroit and Grosse Pointe areas. Strassburg owned two old all-wood Curtiss MF flying boats and he asked Towle to convert one of them to an aluminum hull for more durability. This job was done in a second floor shop along "motorboat lane" near Jefferson Avenue in Detroit by Towle and two local boat builders. The new hull used a wooden frame and was skinned with aluminum that was attached to the frame with button head screws fastened by nuts on the inside of the hull. To avoid water corrosion and leakage, strips of 1¼"-wide flannel dipped into marine glue were placed between the wood frame and the aluminum skin prior to assembly with the screws and nuts, an idea that worked out very well.

Based on the success of the Strassburg conversion, Towle received a new contract to design and build a small, two-place, single-engine flying boat for a Detroit industrialist, Jim Eastman, with financial backing from P.R. Beasley who had teamed up with



Tom Towle designed the "Pelican" (NX-3643) as the prototype for the Eastman "Sea Rover" flying boat. Jim Eastman then formed the Eastman Aircraft Corp. and built 16 "Sea Rovers" in 1930 and 1931.



The Towle TA-2 6-place all-metal amphibian (NX-491H) was built in 1929 by the Towle Aircraft Company. It is shown here at Gar Wood's Grayhaven Estate on the Detroit River.

Eastman on earlier ventures. This biplane flying boat was known as the Towle "Pelican" and was completed in early 1928. Powered by an unreliable 75 hp French Anzani engine, it was later re-engined with a 110 hp Warner and served as the prototype for Jim Eastman's "Sea Rover." Eastman had formed his own company to manufacture this Towle design, which in the production version was enlarged to a four-seater and powered by a 185 hp six-cylinder Curtiss Challenger radial engine. The hull featured the same wood frame/aluminum skin construction that Towle had pioneered in the Paul Strassburg conversion. Sixteen of these "Sea Rovers" were built by Eastman before his company was absorbed into the expanding combine known as the Detroit Aircraft Corporation.

The next design project for the Towle Marine Aircraft Engineering Company was an amphibian for a proposed around-the-world flight. Tom Towle had been approached by H.G. McCarroll, onetime Secretary of the Detroit Board of Commerce, who wanted to promote a flight around the world and needed an airplane suitable for such an ambitious trip. A syndicate was formed to promote the project and Towle was engaged to design and build an airplane for $24,000. It was designed by Towle with the help of several young engineers from the University of Detroit, and was built in the old Convention Hall on Woodward Avenue in Detroit. It was flown from the Detroit River for its first flight in late 1928 by George R. Pond. Known as the Towle WC (for "World Cruiser") it was a six-place, strut-braced, high-wing monoplane with two 150 hp Comet radial engines mounted above the wing. The fuselage/hull followed the traditional Towle construction method of ash framing with aluminum skin while the 52-foot span wing was of wooden construction with fabric covering. Pond had been hired as the pilot for the trip and after installing long-distance fuel tanks in the hull of the WC, the expedition left Detroit in mid-1929. They had progressed as far as Brazil, but at that point Pond had some reservations about the long over-water flight that lay ahead of them — from South America to Dakar in Africa. He was mostly concerned about relying on the relatively un-tried Comet engines on a trans-oceanic flight so he withdrew from the expedition. Without a pilot, McCarroll was forced to abandon his plans, thus bringing the trip to an end. It is not known what was the eventual fate of the Towle WC, but it is assumed that it was abandoned in Brazil and was eventually destroyed.

After completing the WC amphibian, Tom Towle felt that it was time to build a larger all-metal flying boat that would be more suitable for airline use — a project that would require more money. Fortunate-

(Continued next month)

TALE SPINS

Here are some little-known tidbits of aviation trivia:

The first monoplane for the Army was the Detroit-Lockheed YP-24, the last plane the company built in Detroit. Due to financial problems, the company defaulted on its contract in the early 1930s.

The German Luftwaffes trained technicians and pilots and built aircraft secretly after World War I (violating the Versailles Treaty) in Fili, a Moscow suburb. This fact was kept secret until after World War II.

Japanese aviation was given a major start when aircraft companies in that country produced European planes under license.

In 1923, Isoroku Yamamoto — who later planned the Pearl Harbor attack — studied at Harvard University.

The first piloted jet flight occurred on June 30, 1939, when a German Heinkel HE 176 flew for 50 seconds.

Edgar Schmued who was on the P-51 Mustang fighter design team formerly worked for Willy Messerschmitt. The P-51 was one of the Allied planes which defeated the Messerschmitt ME 109.

Fisher Body Division of General Motors designed and built the P-75 Eagle fighter which took to the air on November 17, 1943. Control and engine problems forced an end to the project.

Charles Lindbergh was flying a P-38 Lightning fighter while acting as a civilian consultant for an aircraft company in the Pacific. When a Japanese plane flew near him, he shot it down near the island of Ceram. Since he was civilian, and should have not engaged in combat, Lindbergh's action was not disclosed until the war was over.

During World Was II, the Japanese produced a jet plane, the Nakajima Kikka, which flew on July 7, 1945. It resembled the Messerschmitt ME 262 jet which was probably the result of Japanese and German cooperation.

The Luftwaffe considered U.S. Army Piper Cub observation planes very important targets. In fact, for shooting down a spotter plane, a German pilot received 15 days leave.

During World War II, a Piper Cub pilot received credit for an ME 109. The German plane chased the little spotter plane, but lost control in a tight turn, crashed and burned.

Commander in Chief of Britain's Fighter Command, Sir Hugh Dowding, held back Spitfire fighters from the battle of France and Dunkirk, thus saving them for the later fateful Battle of Britain.

ME 109s were used to ram Allied bombers in a last-ditch, unsuccessful attempt to defend Germany.

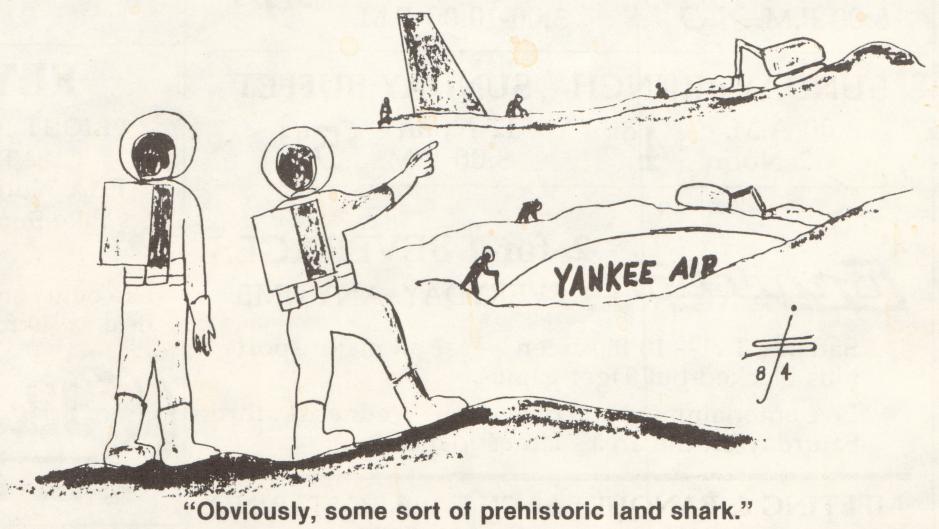
After six missions over Germany, B-24 gunner Sgt. D.S. Gover was grounded when it was discovered that he was only 16. He had enlisted two years earlier and lied about his age.

Air Force General (and actor) Jimmy Stewart instructed pilots and flew B-24 bombing missions during World War II and flew B-52 bombing missions during the Viet Nam War.

Tired pilots caused the aviation industry to design and build a fighter plane with two pilots — one to relieve the other. Long over-water escort missions tired pilots, resulting in reduced combat efficiency. Two Mustang fuselages were joined. The F-82 Twin Mustang fighter was the result. World War II ended before the Twin Mustang became fully operational. The F-82 became the first U.S. plane to score an aerial victory in the Korean War.

After the famous Tokyo Raid which he led in 1942, Lt. Col. James Doolittle was worried about being court-martialed for losing all the planes he commanded on the Raid. Instead of punishment, he was awarded the Medal of Honor and promoted to Brigadier General.

Jack B. Stankrauff

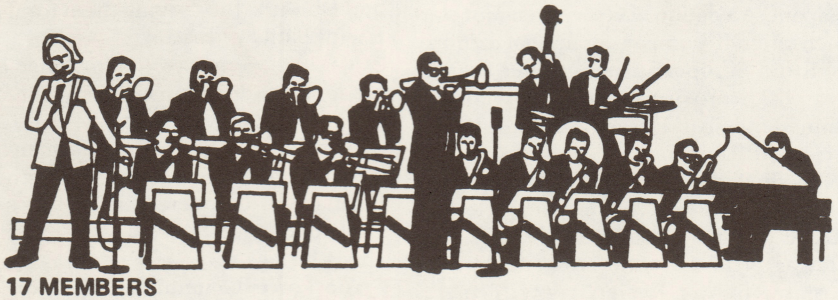


"Obviously, some sort of prehistoric land shark."

"THE BIG BANDS ARE BACK"

Al Townsend AND THE *Doug Kerr* VOCALS

AMBASSADORS



17 MEMBERS

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8 p.m. till midnite

Civil:
There's no such thing as a civil engineer.

Complement:
At Wright-Patterson AFB, a newly assigned colonel walked into his office and asked the cute young stenogrpher, "What is the normal complement of this office?" "Why, Colonel," exclaimed the girl, "I reckon the most normal is "Howdy, honeypot, you're sure lookin' luscious this mornin'!

Explain:
"I've got to jump," the pilot explained.

If Christopher Columbus came over in a wooden vessel, and the Queen of England came over in a metal vessel, how did Dracula come over? In a blood vessel! Sucker!

What does one call an informational tabloid for sun worshippers? A nudes paper.

Mussolini: Italian man of very puny build.

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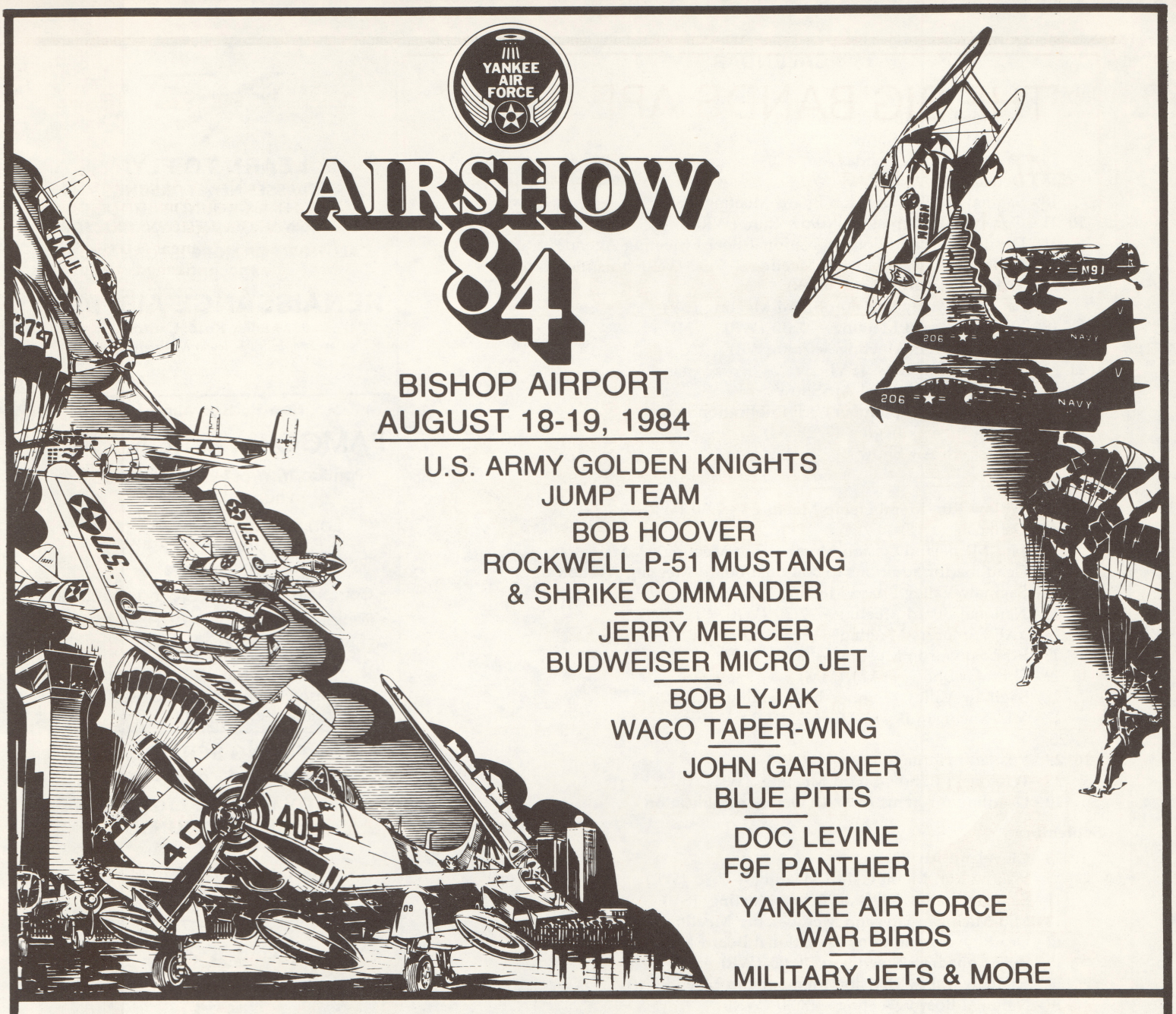

Gates open at 10 a.m. Demonstrations all morning. Show starts at noon.

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CALENDAR

July

1 - Selfridge ANGB Open House
1 - Ann Arbor Air Show
4 - No meeting on holiday
7, 8 - Detroit City Air Show, (YAF)
10 - Saginaw-Valley Division Board Meeting, (SV)
10, 11 - Corvette Autocross at Willow Run, (WR)
11 - Deadline for additions to National Board Meeting Agenda
11 - Willow Run Membership Meeting — 7:30 (WR) (this month only)
14 - YAF Millionaire's Party, (WR)
17 - Saginaw-Valley Division Board Meeting (SV)
18 - National Board Meeting — 7:30 (WR)
19 - YAF Explorers Meeting — 7:30 (WR)
21, 22 - Saginaw Air Show, (SV)
21, 22 - Dayton International Air Show
25 - Deadline for September YAF Publication items
28 - Oshkosh week begins, (7/28/84)
28 - Wurtsmith Air Show

August

1 - Willow Run Membership Meeting — 7:30 (WR)
1, 2, 3, 4 - Oshkosh, (YAF)
8 - Mid-Michigan Division Membership Meeting, (MM)
8 - Deadline for additions to National Board Meeting Agenda
14 - Saginaw-Valley Board Meeting, (SV)
15 - National Board Meeting — 7:30 (WR)
16 - YAF Explorers Meeting — 7:30 (WR)
18 - B-52 Squadron Meeting — 10:00 (WR)
18, 19 - Flint Air Show, (YAF) (MM)
21 - Saginaw-Valley Membership Meeting, (SV)
22 - Mid-Michigan Board Meeting, (MM)
25,
26, 27 - Ypsilanti Heritage Festival, (WR)
28 - Wisconsin-Illinois Board Meeting, (WI)
29 - Deadline for items for YAF October Publication

September

1, 2, 3 - Cleveland Air Show
5 - Willow Run Membership Meeting — 7:30 (WR)
11 - Saginaw Valley Division Board Meeting, (SV)
12 - Mid-Michigan Division Membership Meeting, (MM)
12 - Deadline for additions to National Board Meeting Agenda
15 - B-52 Squadron Meeting — 10:00 (WR)
18 - Saginaw Valley Division Membership Meeting, (SV)
19 - National Board Meeting — 7:30 (WR)
20 - YAF Explorers Meeting — 7:30 (WR)
23 - YAF Founder's Day Fly-In, (WR)
25 - Wisconsin Illinois Board Meeting, (WI)
26 - Mid-Michigan Board Meeting, (MM)
26 - Deadline for items for YAF November Publication *Stan Reich, #055*

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